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ABSTRACT

The Metropolitan Educational Trends and Research Outcomes Center has identified seven projects in the southwestern United States and one in Massachusetts that exemplify the educational practices important in today's ethnolinguistically diverse classrooms. Preliminary findings indicate that each of these programs contains several critical elements that serve as the basis for curriculum and instruction. These elements include primary language instruction and support, a strong focus on English language development, the use of meaning-centered activities, and a strong staff development component. In this paper, an attempt is begun to translate the descriptions of effective practices into guidelines and procedures for program developers and teachers working with ethnolinguistically diverse student populations. An overview is provided of the programs studied, and their critical elements are outlined and arrayed into a framework for guidelines and procedures. In these programs, diversity has been regarded as an asset, rather than a problem. In addition, the theoretical belief that all children can learn is pervasive at the program sites. Three tables present study findings, and a 9-item list of references is included. (SLD)

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Preliminary Guidelines and Procedures For Working With Ethnolinguistically Diverse Student Populations

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INTRODUCTION

The K-12 student population nationwide continues to increase in ethnic and linguistic diversity as we approach the 21st century, and educators are beginning to face the challenges inherent in educating such a diverse group of students. In California, the number of students who speak a language other than English has grown substantially over the last decade. "Almost two-thirds of those arriving in California in 1990 were immigrants; the number of Californians of Asian descent grew by 118% from 1980 to 1990, and the number of Latinos increased 69% during the same period" (Berman et al., 1992). These changing demographics, in concert with decreased funding and support for education, necessitate a shift from traditional instruction to include programs that focus on affording equal access to the curriculum for all students. As a result of both the increasing student diversity and decreasing financial support, teachers often face these challenges alone because limited state and district resources have forced many support personnel (e.g., teachers aides, reading specialists) to take on other responsibilities, leaving little time for direct classroom assistance. These teachers, with their varying degree of classroom experience, therefore become primarily responsible for meeting the challenges inherent in schools.

The goal of the Metropolitan Educational Trends and Research Outcomes (METRO) Center's Improving Programs of Schools Serving Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Student Populations is to identify programs that have successfully addressed the needs of ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse children. These programs or practices show promise and/or evidence of increasing student achievement in English literacy and proficiency as well as academic achievement in the major content areas. As such, METRO Center staff members have identified seven such programs throughout the Pacific Southwest (Vega-Castaneda & Jang, 1992) that exemplify the type of successful practices important in today's ethnolinguistically diverse classrooms. An additional site was selected in Metheun, MA, because of its successful attempt to develop educational practices for a diverse group of English learners even though they consisted of only a small part (approximately 10%) of the student population.

Preliminary findings indicate that each of these programs contains several critical elements that serve as the basis for curriculum and instruction. These include such practices as primary language instruction and support, a strong focus on English language development, the use of meaning-centered activities, and a strong staff development component.

This paper is the first step in the next phase of the research project. That phase is intended to translate the descriptions of promising practices into guidelines and procedures for program developers and teachers who work with ethnolinguistically diverse student populations. As such, this paper provides an overview of the programs that were examined; summarizes the critical elements found in these programs; and arrays these critical elements along with other

project elements for each program. This array constitutes what can be seen as a framework for guidelines and procedures for implementing these successful programs. This framework provides a more general set of guidelines and procedures for implementing the critical elements in a wide variety of settings.

Site Descriptions

Eight sites were chosen as exemplary based on submission of requested information and observations at some school sites (see Vega-Castaneda & Jang, 1992, for a more complete description of the selection process and the individual sites). Six of the sites are located in California, one in Massachusetts, and another in Arizona. The sites consist of three elementary programs, one K-12 program, three secondary programs, and one preprimary program. Four of the sites are located in urban areas, three are in suburban areas, and one is located in a rural community that is becoming more suburban. The chosen sites receive their funding from various sources including Title VII, district funds, Chapter 1, school improvement, and limited English Proficient (LEP) funds (Vega-Castaneda & Jang, 1992).

The following lists a brief summary of each site:

- *Linda Vista Elementary School,* a comprehensive program that includes mainstream English, bilingual (Spanish and Vietnamese), sheltered instruction, and a transitional program for LEP students entering an English only classroom.

- *Central Elementary School*, a restructuring program that, over the past five years, included its nationally recognized bilingual program in addition to a second-language program, primary language program, and literature-based instruction.

- *Irvine Unified School District's Preprimary Program,* a bilingual Montessori program for children ages three to five years old who speak Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Farsi. The program has been expanded to grades K-3 with plans to eventually continue to the sixth grade.

- *Irvine Unified School District's Secondary Program*, a sheltered content instruction program where middle and high school students receive content area instruction in an English language development environment. Recent arrivals spend up to one year at a magnet immersion program prior to placement in the sheltered class.

- *Glendale Unified School District's Academic Excellence Program,* a sheltered English program designed to provide content instruction for LEP students in grades 4-6 who require both language and concept development in social studies, science, and health.

- *Methuen Public Schools*, a transitional bilingual education (TBE) program for Spanish speakers as well as an English as a second language (ESL) program for students who speak languages other than Spanish. The program provides an atmosphere of teacher empowerment and student-centered instruction.

- *Nogales High School Secondary Program*, a comprehensive bilingual program that includes classes in various departments and includes the International Baccalaureate for Spanish-speaking students.

- *Oxnard High School District*, a staff development model that emphasizes peer coaching, sheltered content, and cooperative instruction. The model works in conjunction with a bilingual education program for Spanish-speaking students to provide services for these students once they exit the bilingual program.

Critical Elements of the Programs

To further explain the exemplary characteristics of the chosen sites, this section will delineate the critical elements of each program. As such, this description will be organized according to the individual features. While not every program demonstrated use of all features, these particular traits were found to be characteristic of the majority of the programs, and some were common to all. Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarize the features across the chosen programs. Information on the Oxnard program varies somewhat because it is a staff development program.

Underlying Theoretical Beliefs

A common theme throughout the programs is the notion that all children are capable of learning, regardless of their background. In addition, there is a belief that English language proficiency is necessary for school success. At least two of the programs have a theoretical base, relying on the research of Cummins (1981), Krashen (1981), and in one case, Montessori, to form their programs. Consistent with this research are the views that learning should be context embedded and that there is a need for primary language support when possible so that students can continue academic learning while they become proficient in English.

Overall Goals

All programs are concerned with students' academic success as well as their English language proficiency. The varied goals of the programs are articulated in terms of gains that students make both on standardized and nonstandardized forms of assessment. These goals include students scoring at or above grade level on standardized tests, significant changes from pre- to

post-test scores, and full mainstreaming into all English instruction. Other goals include continued academic achievement in the primary language while the students are learning English, improvement of reading, math and language skills, and providing effective learning environments for students.

Types of Student Groupings

Various types of groupings are used throughout the programs, with most programs employing a variety of grouping types. Consistent across the programs is a focus on ungraded and heterogeneous classroom instruction, generally in self-contained classrooms. Furthermore, there is an emphasis on both integrated instruction, with several subject areas being taught in cohesive units, and the integration of all students into the program. Several programs used both small group and individual instruction as well, and there is an overall feeling that the groupings are somewhat fluid; that is, they change throughout the course of the school year and, perhaps, the school day.

Staff Characteristics/Development

Teachers in the selected programs received extensive training to help them better meet the needs of their students. Many teachers have bilingual or English language development certification and often speak the language of their students. Furthermore, most programs offer extensive and continued in-service training for both teachers and support staff in the program. This in-service training was generally comprised of information based on the latest research and techniques on the education of language minority students. Some of the topics addressed in this training included cooperative learning, whole language techniques, portfolio assessment, and sheltered instruction. The topics are in line with techniques and strategies that would be considered good education for all students. Further emphasis is placed on those techniques and strategies as they relate to English learners. This emphasis was most clearly visible in the Oxnard program where the staff development component was of particular concern.

Support Staff

Support staff was consistent across sites in that each site had a reasonably extensive support component. The support generally consists of bilingual aides, reading specialists, counselors, secretaries, instructional aides, and tutors. In some cases the support staff includes therapists,

psychologists and resource teachers. In one instance, substitutes are provided to release teachers for training and visitations.

Parent Involvement and Resources

Each program had some type of parent involvement group including parent advisory committees. These programs included regularly scheduled meetings, parents acting as volunteers in the classrooms, and "Family Math" and home reading programs. All sites have an open house where parents learn about both classroom and parent programs. One site invites the parents to participate in the teacher in-service training, serving to both educate the parents and strengthen home-school ties.

Instructional Features/Materials

The eight sites have many similar instructional features that include innovative approaches to instruction, such as whole language instruction, literature-based programs, team teaching, peer teaching, cooperative learning, language experience approach, and in one program, the extensive use of manipulatives. These approaches are all used within the context of bilingual, second language, and primary language instruction. Many programs also include tutoring and laboratory instruction.

Most programs also use materials such as special textbooks and collections of books, both in English and the primary language of the students when available, computers, and library/media centers. All chosen sites described the materials that are designated for use within their program.

How English Language Development (ELD) Is Provided/Target Content Areas

All selected sites conduct some form of ESL instruction as an integral part of their program. This ESL instruction incorporates sheltered content instruction, integrated ESL, English immersion, and the "Natural Approach" (Terrill, 1981). One program uses computer-assisted instruction as part of its formal ESL program. The target areas for such instruction include science, social studies, health, math, language arts, fine arts, and affective and motor skills. Some programs add a focus on the students' cultural and historical backgrounds using the English language development program as a means of generating crosscultural awareness given the diverse populations of the school setting.

Curriculum and Characteristics

Most programs base their curriculum on the theories of second-language acquisition with an emphasis on integrated language arts. Furthermore, there is evidence of a crosscultural perspective, and as mentioned, an emphasis on cooperative learning and the Natural Approach. In general, the programs at the selected sites tend to focus more on English language development in context rather than traditional methods and curriculum that call for more context-reduced types of activities such as filling in worksheets.

Assessment/Outcome Measures/Redesignation Criteria

Most programs use some form of standardized testing to assess students in the program. These tests include the Language Assessment Scales, the California Achievement Test, the Idea Placement Level and the Idea Proficiency Test, the Stanford Reading Test, and the California Test of Basic Skills. In addition, several programs use portfolios, report cards, checklists, grade averages, writing samples, and oral and written assignments to assess the progress of program participants. All programs use teacher evaluations as a further means of evaluating program success.

The selected sites vary in terms of criteria used to redesignate students as fluent English proficient (FEP). Most require a student to remain in the program from three to four years and then use some type of student study team to evaluate the students for redesignation. Academic work and exit tests are used in some cases as are annual testing results.

Critical Elements Across Sites

Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarize the critical elements of the eight selected program sites. Data in the tables were generated from the site descriptive protocols developed from the information received from the schools and site visits when possible. Some of the data indicated as missing were not available from the individual programs.

Table 1
Nogales, Irvine Preprimary, and Methuen: Critical Elements of Programs

School/feature	Nogales	Irvine	Methuen
Type of program	•Extensive bilingual program •ESL program	•English language development	•Transitional bilingual education •ESL
Population served	•Schoolwide program •All students including LEPs, grades 9-12	•Districtwide program •99 preschool students, 3-5 years old	•Districtwide program
How selected	•Random selection •100 from each class •Reading: selected by teacher and/or admin. •10% of LEP classes randomly selected	•Self-selected by parents	•All entering students who indicated on home language survey that they speak a language other than English at home are tested using the Bilingual Syntax Measure (Burt, Dulay, & Hernandez-Chavez, 1973) and interviewed to determine placement in program
Reason implemented		•To establish a successful early intervention program •To prevent school failure	•To respond to both state and federal mandates and student needs
Language(s) spoken	•Spanish	•Spanish •Vietnamese •Chinese •Farsi •Japanese •Korean •other	•Spanish •Vietnamese •Korean •Gujaratian •Lebanese •Turkish •Polish •Haitian •Cambodian •Armenian •Indian
Type(s) of groupings		•Ungraded, self-contained classes •Individualized instruction •Small group instruction	•Self-contained instruction •Pull-out instruction •Cooperative groupings •Pull-out program for ESL

table continues

School/feature	Nogales	Irvine	Methuen
Underlying beliefs—theoretical framework	•All students are capable of learning •Teachers can cause learning; •Offers basic foundation of academic skills	•Recognizes the importance of early childhood education •Incorporates Piagetian and Vygotskian approaches	•To provide the best possible education for language minority students while maintaining uniqueness
Staff characteristics	•36 out of the 82 teachers are bilingual or LEP certified •42 teachers speak Spanish	•Teachers trained in ELD techniques •Teachers speak language of the LEP students	•ESL or bilingual certificated teachers •Teacher speak language of LEP students
Staff development	•Continued in-service training	•Continuing extensive staff development with time line of goals •Latest research and methodologies •Sheltered English	•Continued in-service training on six strategies for teaching ESL •Language development techniques •Latest research and methodologies
Support staff	•Bilingual reading specialist •Bilingual counselors •Bilingual secretary	•Bilingual secretary •Instructional aides	•Instructional aides •Bilingual tutors
Parent involvement and resources	•Parent involvement group •Local service organizations	•Parent advisory committee for each language group	•Parent advisory committee
Funding sources	•State and local funding •Title VII •North Central Improvement Program	•State and local funding •Title VII	•State and local funding
Instructional features	•Extensive bilingual program •Regular classroom instruction •Team teaching •Laboratory instruction	•Whole language instruction •Team teaching •"Materials driven" program for motor and cognitive/linguistic development	•Regular classroom instruction •Language experience approach •Whole language approach •ESL •Transitional bilingual education •Instruction is given for two periods daily •Time decreases as student is capable of learning English in content areas •Students in self-contained TBE classrooms receive a minimum of one period daily

table continues

School/feature	Nogales	Irvine	Methuen
Instructional materials		•Special textbooks •Extensive collection of bilingual materials	•Special textbooks
Overall goals of program	•Standardized test scores for all students will be at or above grade level	•To establish an effective learning environment for 3 to 5 year olds •To facilitate English oral proficiency and reading readiness/language arts skills	•Effective acquisition of English language skills •Earliest possible full mainstreaming of LEPs
How ELD provided	•Formal ESL •Computer support	•ESL instruction •Integrated ESL	•ESL instruction •Total physical response (TPR) •Natural approach •Integrated English instruction •Computer support
Target content areas	•Math •Writing •Reading •Speaking •Listening •Affect	•Math •Social studies •Language arts •Science •Music •Art •Affect •Developmental areas	•Math •Language acquisition •English reading •Spelling •Handwriting •Social studies •English language arts •Spanish language arts •Science •Music •Art •History and culture of students' native country
Curriculum characteristics		•Based on the levels of the Natural Approach	•Based on three levels of ESL: beginning, intermediate, advanced
Assessment and outcome measures	•ITBS (TAP) score •Teacher-designed instruments •Teacher evaluation •Library circulation record	•Test of Basic Experience (TOBE)2: consists of four tests, one subtest each in the areas of language, math, science, and social science	•Criterion-referenced tests that accompany the approved ESL texts and Macmillan's Spanish reading series fulfill mandated annual testing requirements
Time required to reach grade level in content area instruction in English			•The average students in the ESL/TBE program are successfully mainstreamed in less than two and one half years

Table 2
Central, Glendale, and Irvine Secondary: Critical Elements of Programs

School/feature	Central	Glendale USD	Irvine USD
Type of program	•English •Spanish •Sheltered •Transition	•Sheltered English •Bilingual focus •Primary language program in language arts, math, content area instruction for LEPs who have not met criteria for transition to English •ESL •Transitional reading program •Schoolwide reading/language arts program	•Sheltered English
Population served	•Districtwide •Schoolwide	•Districtwide •Partial school •Fourth-sixth grade LEP students	•Districtwide •Partial school •Secondary schools
Reason implemented	•Due to influx of recent immigrants who come to school with little or no formal education, as well as being limited English proficient •To create a learning environment that stimulates academic and personal growth among all children, taking into account different learning styles, language background, etc., in order to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills at their own pace without experiencing failure in the early grades	•To provide assistance for LEP students who speak "exotic" languages •To provide assistance for bilingual education students as they transition to English instruction •To address the needs of a linguistically, culturally, and socially diverse student population	
Type(s) of groupings	•Ungraded •Small group instruction •Individualized instruction •Integration of all students	•Heterogeneous classroom instruction •Ungraded language arts program •Self-contained instruction •Graded •Pull-out instruction •Small group instruction	•Ungraded •Self-contained instruction •Small group instruction

table continues

School/feature	Central	Glendale USD	Irvine USD
Parent involvement and resources	•Site-based management •Parenting program •Family outreach •Home/reading program •Family math	•Parent advisory committee •Open house	•Parent advisory committee •Parents as volunteers •Meetings for parents to learn about program •Regularly scheduled meetings •Parents are invited to participate in teacher in-service training
Funding sources	•Elementary and secondary education act (ESEA)	•State and local funding •Title VII	•Title VII
Instructional features	•Laboratory instruction •Family math •Literature-based reading •Second language program •Primary language program •Preschool program	•Team teaching •Peer teaching •Cooperative learning •Language experience approach •Tutoring sessions	•Peer teaching •Cooperative learning •Language experience approach •Laboratory instruction •Tutorial sessions
Instructional materials	•Library/media center •Computer lab	•Special textbooks •Special instructional materials	•Special textbooks •Special instructional materials
How ELD provided	•Sheltered content instruction	•ESL instruction •Sheltered English •Integrated English instruction	•ESL instruction •Sheltered English •Integrated English instruction •English immersion
Target content areas		•Science •Social Studies •Health	•Reading •Math •English language arts •Affect
Curriculum and instructional support	•library/media center •counseling center •computer lab •Basic Skills Supplemental Assistance Program		

table continues

School/feature	Central	Glendale USD	Irvine USD
Assessment and outcome measures	•Standardized testing •Portfolio assessment •Checklists •Report cards •Tests	•Language assessment scales (LAS) •Oral English language skills •IDEA placement level •California Achievement Test (CAT) scores	English proficiency •Idea Proficiency Test Academic performance: •Stanford Reading Test •California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) •Oral and written English assignments •Grade averages •Writing samples •Rates of assignment to the gifted and talented education program
Time required to reach grade level in content-area instruction	•Students can take up to four years to complete criteria for K–3		

Table 3
Linda Vista and Oxnard: Critical Elements of Programs

School/feature	Linda Vista[a]	Oxnard[b]
Type of program	•TBE •Sheltered content instruction	•Staff development for "mainstream" social studies teachers
Population served	•Schoolwide program •Pre K-6	•Teachers who do not teach in either bilingual, sheltered, ESL, or ELD contexts
How selected		•Selected by committee
Staff development		•Pedagogic strategies of cooperative learning •Sheltered instruction •Thematic instruction •Multiethnic awareness
Support staff	•Instructional aides, English only and bilingual •Cross-age tutors	
Instructional features	•Primary language support when possible •Sheltered content instruction including an integrative sheltered environment •Cooperative learning •Teaming and collaboration among the teachers •Cooperative learning	•Sheltered content instruction •Cooperative learning
Instructional materials		•Lesson designs that incorporate sheltered learning and cooperative strategies •Support materials and writing prompts based on textual materials to be used in process writing assignments •lessons and support materials that stress the common themes within each respective subject and the theme connections between these subjects in the area of democratic ideas •Nonwestern world history units

table continues

School/feature	Linda Vista[a]	Oxnard[b]
Curriculum characteristics	•Primary language instruction •Sheltered content instruction	Use of •Simulations •Reader's theater •Process writing •Strategies •Content-area enrichment •Thematic instruction •Cooperative learning

[a]See Vega-Castaneda, 1993, for a more complete summary of the characteristics of the Linda Vista site.
[b]See Vega-Castaneda, Johansen, & Johnston, 1992, for a more complete summary of the Oxnard staff development program.

Conclusions

Examination of the summary of critical elements of the various programs selected as exemplary as well as the individual site descriptive protocols leads to the following conclusions. Whenever possible, successful programs use primary language support and instruction that the students may continue with their academic learning agenda as they develop English proficiency. In all cases this use of the primary language is coupled with a strong English language development component to facilitate this English proficiency. When primary language support is not possible, sheltered content instruction and other methods of ESL instruction are used so that the students will understand and manipulate English as soon as possible.

Moreover, there is a focus on meaning-centered activities in that most programs use a more holistic, hands-on approach to instruction, one that is embedded in context. This instruction includes the use of special materials, both in terms of textbooks and other classroom items such as manipulatives. Every effort is made to both engage the student in the education process and make that process comprehensible to the student.

In addition, each program has a strong staff development component and a highly trained staff. Teachers and support staff consistently and continually receive training in strategies and techniques designed to facilitate their allowing equal access to the curriculum for all students. At times parents are invited to participate in this training as each program has a parent involvement component.

Finally, it would seem that diversity in the case of these programs is viewed as an asset rather than a problem. The underlying theoretical belief that all children can learn is pervasive throughout the selected sites. That these programs are successful is evident from examining the data submitted during the selection process (see Vega-Castaneda, 1992, and Vega-Castaneda & Jang, 1992 for a summary of criteria defining success). The critical elements of these programs can only serve as guidelines for the further implementation of more successful programs.

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